

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. The first cooperatives were established with the aid of violence. During the five years between 1944 and 1949, however, there were no more than 500 cooperative farms, operating scarcely more than five percent of Bulgaria's land. Only the Communists and small and landless peasants joined. The middle Bulgarian peasant did not yield to threats, imprisonment, and violence. As a result the Communists were not able to carry out the orders of their Moscow chiefs to collectivize the Bulgarian rural areas.
2. At the end of 1949 and at the beginning of 1950, however, propaganda and measures of violence were intensified. Dozens of families who resisted the Communists were sent to prison and to camps. Despite this the heroic spirit of the peasants was not broken and they remained outside the cooperatives.
3. Stalin in the Kremlin probably became furious that the Bulgarian Communists, headed by Vulko Chervenkov, had not succeeded in crushing the spirit of the Bulgarian farmer and his love for liberty and independence. The repressive measures taken against him will be recorded by the history of humanity.
4. At the beginning of 1950 the government issued decrees concerning the delivery of the total production of milk, wool, lambs, fowls, eggs, grapes, etc. There was also a decree ordering a ten-fold increase in taxes, and accordingly for one decare of grain 3,000 leva were demanded, for one decare of industrial crops, 5,000 leva, for one sheep 1,500 leva, for one hive of bees 8,000 leva, for one cow 3,000 leva, etc. It must also be recalled that deliveries were made to the government at strictly controlled and low prices, averaging 20 leva per kilogram of grain, 80 leva for industrial crops, 260 leva for wool, 45 leva for milk, 500 leva for honey. At the same time the yields were 50 percent below the figures stated in the decrees, so that each farm family was taxed about 50,000 leva on its general income and together with all other taxes, direct and indirect, its tax burden came to 120,000 leva, although average gross income was not more than 100,000 leva.
5. The price of all industrial products, especially agricultural equipment, rose. A plow cost 20,000 leva, a plowshare 500 leva, wagon tires 400 leva a kilogram, construction timber 30,000 leva, nails 660 leva per kilogram, cotton yarn 4,000 leva per kilogram, woolen cloth up to 8,000 leva per meter, etc.
6. A decree was issued nullifying all back taxes and fines of those who would become cooperative members by the end of 1950.

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7. Another decree was issued which assigned crop quotas irrespective of whether or not the fields were planted and whether or not drought, hail, flood, etc., might affect the crops. All farmers were assigned delivery quotas which were greater than their actual crops. Between 1 August and 10 October 1950 there were wholesale fines, arrests, sentences, beatings, and imprisonments. Grain, fodder, and industrial and oleaginous crops had to be delivered to the government, and 80 percent of the farmers did not even have enough seed left for planting. The farmers went from village to village and to other okoliyas in search of grain so that they could meet their quotas. In Elkhovo Okoliya, for instance, out of the 548,000 decares under cultivation, 638,000 decares were assigned quotas of 80 kilograms per decare for grain, and 40 kilograms per decare of industrial and oleaginous crops. Delivery was made of 28,000,000 kilograms of grain, 2,500,000 kilograms of sunflowers; 300,000 kilograms of raw cotton; 600,000 kilograms of hemp fiber; all the grapes; 1,000,000 kilograms of corn (with no allowances made for the drought that season); all the flax, sesame and other crops. Of animal products, over 200,000 kilograms of raw wool were delivered; 2,000,000 kilograms of milk; 30,000 lambs and 5,000,000 eggs, and the producers were left nothing. All the above items were shipped by rail to Burgas and from there to the USSR.
8. To drive home what this means, the following figures indicating the needs of the producers themselves, should be studied:
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| (1) The working population requires, for its own sustenance, over 300 kilograms of grain per capita each year or ----- | 18,000,000 kg. |
| (2) Seed at the rate of 20 kilograms per decare for 398,000 decares ----- | 7,960,000 kg. |
| (3) Feed for 120,000 sheep at the minimum rate of 30 kilograms per head yearly ----- | 3,600,000 kg. |
| (4) Feed for 25,000 head of cattle, at a minimum yearly rate per head of 60 kilograms ----- | 1,500,000 kg. |
| (5) Feed for at least 10,000 hogs at 200 kilograms each ----- | 2,000,000 kg. |
| (6) Feed for poultry: at least 100,000 fowls receiving 10 kilograms each ----- | 1,000,000 kg. |
| Total requirement of grain of Elkhovo Okoliya ----- | 34,000,000 kg. |
| Quantity of Grain Actually Left with the Farmers of Elkhovo Okoliya ----- | 3,840,000 kg. |
| Deficit of Grain of Elkhovo Okoliya ----- | 30,240,000 kg. |
9. Those unable to comply with the quotas were punished. In Elkhovo Okoliya over 1,000 persons were arrested, over 400 were fined, and the total amount collected in fines was over 8,000,000 leva. Altogether 20 persons were sent to concentration camps and 49 to prisons.
10. Farmers Who Have Been Fined:
- (1) Atanas Shishmanov, village of Melnitsa. He delivered 12,000 kilograms of wheat to the State, and was fined 60,000 levas. He was arrested, his arms tied behind him, and a sign placed on him proclaiming: "I am an enemy of the people". In this manner he was paraded through the whole village.
 - (2) Ivan Ilchev, city of Elkhovo, fined 10,000 leva, interned, and his whole family banished from Vrachan.

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- (3) Khristo Yalamov, city of Elkhovo, fined 10,000 leva.
- (4) Zlatyu Mitev, village of Zhdrebinovo, fined 30,000 leva, sentenced to one year of imprisonment.
- (5) Atanas Aygurov, village of Zhdrebinovo, 70 years old, fined 30,000 leva, sentenced to one year of imprisonment.
- (6) Kolyu Mitev Astakov, village of Zhdrebinovo, fined 30,000 leva, sentenced to one year of imprisonment.
- (7) Kolyu Tonev Rusev, village of Zhdrebinovo, fined 30,000 leva, sentenced to four months of imprisonment.
- (8) Vileko Aristov, village of Zhdrebinovo, fined 20,000 leva.
- (9) Stoyan Z. Pendekov, village of Zhdrebinovo, fined 10,000 leva.
- (10) Tenyu Petrov, village of Zhdrebinovo, fined 10,000 leva.
- (11) Minyu Tonev, village of Zhdrebinovo, fined 10,000 leva.
- (12) Georgi Todorov Nedini, village of Zhdrebinovo, fined 30,000 leva.
- (13) Georgi Petkov, village of Zhdrebinovo, fined 10,000 leva.
- (14) Aleksandar, village of Popovo, 20,000 leva.
- (15) Georgi Donkov, village of Popovo, 30,000 leva.
- (16) Petar Shutavkov, village of Popovo, 30,000 leva, as well as internment and the deportation of his family to Vrachansko.
- (17) Atanas Balamotov, village of Popovo, 5,000 leva because as president of the village soviet he did not make sufficient collections for the government. He was replaced.
- (18) Delcho Andreev, village of Mamarchevo, 10,000 leva.
- (19) Khristo, teacher from the village of Bolyarovo, was fined three times, a total of 60,000 leva.
- (20) Rusi Dimchev, fined six times, a total of 100,000 leva.
- (21) Stoyu Dzhenkov, fined 10,000 leva.
- (22) Chervenakov, 10,000 leva, and sentenced to a year and a half imprisonment, in the Sliven prison.

11. All sums owned by the government for the compulsory deliveries were kept in payment of taxes owed to the Bulgarian National Bank. Practically the whole population owed the bank for land, fines, etc., so that after the deliveries the peasants were left with neither grain nor money.
12. Before the farmers had recovered from their desperation over the measures mentioned above, a new decree came out guaranteeing farmers who would join cooperatives food, feed, and seeds, while those who refused to join or who operated more than seven decares, were excluded from any support, including loans from the Bulgarian National Bank.
13. Threatened by starvation and violence, and only for this reason, the farmers joined the cooperatives en masse hoping that they would receive help from the State. Hence by the end of 1950 there were already over 1,700 cooperatives, embracing over 50 percent of the land and of the farm families. In Elkhovo

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Okoliya, from 25 cooperatives with 1,260 members, operating 36,000 decare or five percent of the land, the cooperatives grew until by the end of 1950 there were 43 of them, with more than 6,000 members managing 360,000 decare of land, 80,000 sheep, 10,000 head of cattle, i.e., over 60 percent of the land and farms in the okoliya.

14. However, immediately after their entry into the cooperatives a new decree was enacted demanding of each member 20 kilograms of grain per decare for seed, and 15 kilograms of grain for each head of stock. Those who were not able to comply with the decree, although they had turned over all their worldly belongings to the cooperatives, were excluded from them and literally turned out on the street like beggars. This represented about 20 percent of the cooperative members in the Elkhovo Okoliya, who today are a miserable group of hungry, half-naked, and barefoot individuals, seeking occasional work so that they can keep body and soul together.
15. The cooperatives have no credits to advance to their members, and even those who can work do not have the necessary tools and equipment with which to earn a livelihood.
16. The results achieved during 1950 by the cooperatives, although these received generous backing from the State and cultivated the best soil, have been highly unsatisfactory and discouraging to the members of Bulgarian society. For example, in Elkhovo Okoliya, the best record was achieved by the cooperative in the village of Izgrev. A working day was compensated at the rate of 49 leva, 5 kilograms of vegetables, one kilogram of rye, 0.500 kilograms of oats and barley, and 0.400 kilograms of sunflower seeds. Taking into consideration the market prices for these items, one may figure the work day at 189 leva, and since there are on the average 250 work days, the income of the cooperative may be considered 40,000 leva for the year.
17. In the cooperative, for example, in the village of Voden, the work day was computed in money and kind at 72 leva, the cooperative in the village of Lalkovo at 100 leva per work day, the cooperative at the village of Karavelovo, which had been a virtual breadbasket at 134 leva per work day, the cooperative in the village of Zhrebino at 145 leva, while the cooperative in the village of Popovo concluded the year with a loss of 51 leva per work day. These results discourage the cooperative members and produce daily quarrels and fights in the cooperative offices, on the streets, and in the fields.
18. The administrative staff, the representatives, and the brigadiers of the cooperatives are all thorough-going Communists who dispose of the land, stock, and tools of the cooperatives as if these were their private property. For example, at the cooperative in the village of Sharkovo it is a known fact that the administrative staff ate up 98 sheep during the winter. At the cooperative in the village of Strandzha the administrative staff together with the president, Prodan Domuschiev, and the former president of the Okoliya soviet, Dimo Kostov, every day slaughter sheep belonging to the cooperative and eat and drink lavishly at the cost of the cooperative, while at the same time the stock there is dying off for lack of feed. In the Sharkovo village cooperative 1,260 sheep died, out of a total of 5,000, and at least 1,500 are sure to die. At the Popovo village cooperative, furthermore, out of 77 horses 42 died, and the rest are dying off gradually.
19. On 16 February 1951, a committee was formed consisting of a professor of veterinary medicine, Dr. Dobrev, Okoliya veterinary, from the city of Elkhovo; Dr. Andrev, in charge of the veterinary clinic in the city of Elkhovo; Dr. Andreev, assistant professor of the Sofia University medical faculty; and a representative of the State Insurance Institute.
20. The task of the above committee was to investigate the cooperatives. The first one which was visited was the village of Sharkovo cooperative. The committee found that as a result of starvation and poor management all the sheep on the cooperative,

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totalling 5,000, which had not received a single gram of fodder up to that time, were ill with the "Vlas" disease (Vlas means hair - perhaps a hair disorder is meant), as a result of which 683 sheep and 580 lambs had died between 1 January and 16 February 1951.

21. At the cooperative in the village of Sitovo during the same period and for the same reasons, 400 sheep died, and an equal number could not be expected to survive. The total number of sheep owned by the cooperative was 4,000.
22. At the Popovo village cooperative there were 77 horses, of which only three would be with foal by spring.
23. Cooperatives both in the cities and in the villages were being used and exploited for the benefit of Party members and agitators. As an example, one may point to the Elkhovo city workers' cooperative, which before 9 September 1944 had 27 members, and today has 220. This cooperative came to the sad realization that they ended 1948 with a deficit of 24,000,000 leva, 1949 with a deficit of 42,000,000 leva, and according to the president the year 1950 would end with an additional 20,000,000 leva loss. These deficits are the result of both inefficiency and the depredations of Party officials.
24. The cooperative in the village of Srem before 1944 was held up as a model for others to follow. In 1950 it ended with a deficit of 1,024,000 leva.
25. The cooperative in the village of Voden is headed by the well-known Communist, Georgi Fedin. He falsified the accounts, and used the materials intended for a wine-pressing installation in the building of a two-story house in Voden for himself. There was also a shortage of 10,000 liters of wine and 5,000 liters of ingredients for the making of raki. Consequently the cooperative completed the year with a 2,800,000 deficit. Instead of being imprisoned, Fedin was decorated with a medal awarded by the Praesidium of the National Assembly, carrying with it a cash emolument of 200,000 leva! All the cooperatives in the okoliya built with the people's love and work are in such bad condition that they will be bankrupt in a short time.
26. The industrial combine of the Okoliya soviet in the city of Slkhovo takes in 24 nationalized enterprises, four rolling mills, three creameries, three carding installations, a brick and ceramics factory, and so forth. When these factories were privately owned, they operated at a profit. At the present, however, the director of the combine reports that 1950 was ended with a deficit of about 8,000,000 leva.
27. The Bulgarian Agricultural Cooperative Bank used to be the mainstay of the country's farmer. A part of its functions has been taken over by the so-called Investment Bank, and another by the Bulgarian National Bank. The Bulgarian National Bank is supposed to handle all private, cooperative, and public financing, and yet for this purpose it has assets amounting to only 80,000,000 leva. By contrast, the defunct Bulgarian Agricultural Cooperative Bank, at the time of its closing, had one account which itself amounted to 400 - 500 million leva. This figure is sufficient to indicate that the activity of the Bulgarian National Bank is almost nil, and that it is in effect little else but a cashier for state funds. The "Popular" Bank in the city of Elkhovo, after making paupers out of enterprises and business men, has been entirely inactive and faces liquidation.

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